

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering this application.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 9-10 are pending in this application. Claim 9 is independent. Claim 10 depends from claim 9.

Rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C § 102

Claims 9-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,754,868 issued to Bristow et al. ("Bristow"). For the reasons set forth below, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 9 is directed to a method for testing devices under test (hereinafter, "DUTs") in parallel with control apparatuses by utilizing a connection setting section between them. Independent claim 9 requires, in part, the step of acquiring *connection switching setting data* indicating which one of the plurality of site control apparatuses is to be connected with each of the test modules. Independent claim 9 further requires, in part, the step of connecting each of control apparatuses with test modules based on the connection switching setting data so that each control apparatus is connected with the plurality of devices under test.

As a result, each of control apparatuses is connected with a plurality of DUTs, and the plurality of DUTs are tested in parallel by using test modules controlled by the plurality of control apparatuses. In one embodiment of the invention as shown in Figure 1, each of the plurality of control apparatuses 130a, 130b, ... , 130h can be connected with each of the test

modules **150a**, **150b**, ... , **150f** by arranging connection switching setting data in the connection setting section **140**. As such, the plurality of control apparatuses can perform different test sequences on DUTs by flexibly and simply changing the topology data *without rearranging the hardware configuration* (see e.g., paragraph [0025] of published Specification).

In contrast, Bristow fails to disclose any method to *flexibly* connect test site computers with DUTs. In the Office Action dated October 12, 2006, the Examiner has asserted at pages 2-3 that Figure 10 in Bristow illustrates a test system **100** where any one of the test site computers **125** can be connected with any one of the DUTs **110**. In addition, the Examiner has asserted at page 3 that Figure 9 of Bristow shows a test system where any test site computer **125** is capable of transmitting the same test vector to each DUT **110** through pin scrambler **155**.

However, Applicant respectfully notes that Figure 10 of Bristow merely shows a system for testing a single DUT having more pins than PE channels available in a test site by using a plurality of test sites. According to Bristow, the computer program selects one of test site computers to control the linked test sites and the remainder of the test site computers are idled. From the above description in Bristow, it is clear that Bristow does not disclose a system for testing a plurality of DUTs in parallel by using a plurality of test sites (see Bristow, col. 8, lines 55-62). Further, Figure 9 of Bristow merely shows a system where all DUTs in parallel are connected to a single test site, and, therefore, fails to show a system for testing a plurality of DUTs in parallel by using a plurality of test sites.

In view of the above, Bristow does not contemplate any method to flexibly connect a plurality of control apparatuses or test sites with a plurality of DUTs in parallel. Further, because the test apparatus of Bristow is systematically fixed, the steps of flexibly setting a topology as required by claim 9 are not performed in Bristow. Therefore, Bristow fails to

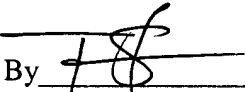
show or suggest all the limitations as required by claim 9. Thus, claim 9 is patentable over Bristow. In addition, dependent claim 10 is also patentable for at least the same reasons set forth above. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 02008/106002).

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments